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ORLEANS PARISH JUVENILE COURT MOVES TO HOLD YOUTH ACCOUNTABLE FOR DELINQUENT ACTIVITY THAT PRESENTS A RISK TO PUBLIC SAFETY.

NEW ORLEANS---In a special en banc meeting of the Judges of Orleans Parish Juvenile Court today and by unanimous agreement, the Judges have decided that all juveniles arrested on charges that pose a risk to the public will be detained until seen by a Juvenile Court Judge.

In the interest of public safety the Court will immediately institute a policy to detain youth who are arrested for offenses that may present a risk of danger to the public. "Detention is not the solution," the Judges said. "In order to prevent further escalation into the criminal justice system, courts need options such as electronic monitoring, pro-social community-based activities that keep kids off the streets and out of trouble, respite placement, and mentoring programs." The Judges believe that community based-programing must effectively promote child safety, permanency, and well-being, public safety; offender accountability, healthy family functioning, and community protection must be paramount. Meaningful detention alternatives aid in keeping youth from re-offending.

Decisions about juvenile release begin with a risk-assessment screening instrument (RAI), which is a written checklist of criteria that are applied to rate each minor for detention and recidivism related risks. The RAI instrument utilizes predictive science and prior record to assess a juvenile's risk of re-offense and likelihood to appear at scheduled court hearings.

The Judges understand that the statutory purpose of the juvenile justice system is the rehabilitation of juveniles. The Juvenile Court has been viewed as the guardian of youth and has been charged with the protection of a youth's best interest. The Judges recognize their role as leaders in juvenile justice and as such, continually work to convene and engage our

community in meaningful partnerships that promote public safety and improve system responses.

However, the Judges have seen an alarming increase in delinquent activity in our city, as well as an increase in recidivism by youth who have previously been, or are presently under the supervision of the state juvenile probation system.

In order to meet the court's statutory obligation to protect both public safety and the safety of individual juveniles the Judges adopted the following detention policy:

Amendment to the
Local Rules of Court
Of the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court

The Court, meeting en banc, unanimously adopted the following policy, effective May 29, 2019.

All youth charged with offenses that pose a risk to public safety will be held pending a probable cause hearing before a juvenile judge and will be retained for trauma screening, verification of school attendance and adequate housing, mentoring, participation in pro-social activities, job training, counseling, after-school and summer activities, as well as other appropriate referrals that meet the individual needs of the youth, in order to meet the court's statutory obligation to protect both public safety and the safety of individual juveniles.